



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Contact: Teresa Lee (415) 749-4900
Luna Salaver (415) 749-5196

Air District Tightens Diesel Generator Standards

In its efforts to reduce toxic and small particle pollution in the Bay Area, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) Board of Directors voted today to revise two rules regulating diesel back-up generators. The tighter standards require back-up generators rated 50 horsepower (hp) or more to obtain Air District permits and new diesel generators will need Best Available Control Technology (BACT) to curtail harmful diesel emissions.

"Under the current energy emergency, the Air District is very concerned about the potential pollution from back-up generators and how these back-up engines are really being used," said Air District Executive Officer Ellen Garvey. "The elimination of the permit exemption will bring these generators into the District's permit system and require that new engines have pollution controls to minimize emissions."

Diesel particulate has been identified as a toxic air pollutant by the California Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, small particle pollution from internal combustion engines can penetrate deep into the lungs and cause damage.

Under the revised rules, back-up generators will be allowed 100 hours per calendar year for discretionary use and unlimited operation during actual blackouts. Essential public services, such as hospitals, police and fire departments, public transit agencies and sewage treatment plants are allowed 200 hours of discretionary operation.

This change also affects portable engines of similar size. Examples include compressors for jackhammers, cement cutters, and other construction equipment powered by large portable engines.

Information on the amendments to the back-up generator rule is available on the Air District's website at www.baaqmd.gov.

#